



## COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

**COMPANY: ALCONS AUDIO**  
**LOCATION: CALIFORNIA, USA**

PHOTO: ERIK PETERSEN PHOTOGRAPHY

Houses of worship often feature high ceilings, which can be a problem for sound reinforcement design. However, at the Community Bible Church of Vallejo in California, it is an unusually low one that provided the challenge. An Alcons Audio pro-ribbon system was the solution.

Founded in 1980 by the late Pastor Steve Fernandez, Community Bible Church of Vallejo had several homes until it established itself in a former Safeway supermarket building, altered and rebuilt in 1998. More recently a new, 1,200-seat worship centre was added, but local regulations meant that the 330,000 sq ft building had to be low-rise. In turn, this meant the interior height of the building caused issues when the sound reinforcement system was being specified. "The room is about 140ft wide, the seats are 70ft deep and the ceiling is around eight feet lower than would be ideal. Putting a system close to the ceiling would cause a lot of problems with 500 cycle reflections," explained Mark Sweet, Senior Manager - Integration/Engineering at San Francisco systems integrator Spider Ranch Productions.

"In addition, the seats are not raked and the walls are all very reflective. Acoustics were not designed into the building, so we knew it would be a challenge to install an audio system that would provide high quality coverage for all."

With church services typically including 35 minutes of musical praise and a 50-60 minute sermon, Mark worked with Rocky Giannetta - a local audio specialist and support engineer in room modelling and loudspeaker analysis - to write a brief which took into account both the physical characteristics

of the room and the worship requirements. He then invited five loudspeaker manufacturers to provide EASE modelling and propose a system which would provide high quality coverage throughout.

Four of the companies visited Spider Ranch's premises, where a 60ft x 80ft space was available for demonstrations. Representatives of the Church were invited to spend a day both listening to, and looking at, the systems.

"Each manufacturer had to provide a complete speaker cluster of their design, so the client could understand how the complete package would look and sound, as well as being able to compare the size and form of the different types - all in the context of their project. We wanted them to compare apples with apples, not just listen to some speakers," said Mark.

With a common mixing console and sound sources, the Church was able to make a truly objective assessment of the four systems on offer. An Alcons Audio pro-ribbon solution was their first choice, in terms of both sound quality and the size/scale of the package. "They really liked the Alcons audio quality and it was physically smaller, which would look more appropriate in their room," said Mark. "In a perfect world, churches don't want to see speakers at all. Speakers are generally boxy and large in size, but Alcons' design is clean and contemporary. This blended into the overall design of the church, making the speakers less visibly obtrusive."

The chosen Alcons system features L-R hangs of seven LR7/120 micro line array modules, used predominantly for music, with a centre, horizontally-arrayed

cluster of four RR12 point source array modules for speech. A pair of VR8 compact versatile monitors are used for outfills, with the system powered and controlled by two Sentinel10 amplified loudspeaker controllers.

Another important factor was that, as the stage projects into the auditorium, a system that maximised gain before feedback was a 'must'. Alcons pro-ribbon technology was, again, the perfect solution.

"Because of the construction schedule, we had to install the rigging for the system months before Alcons was actually chosen. I mandated that the X-Y rigging points for each possible solution had to be specified and created a rigging arrangement which allowed us a 15ft horizontal arrangement for the L-R clusters. We knew whatever was chosen would fit within that area," added Mark.

Thanks to its compact size and weight, once supplied the Alcons system was installed very quickly, with David Rahn of Alcons US working closely with Mark and Rocky Giannetta on the tuning process.

"The Church is really happy with the high, distinct quality of the Alcons sound," said Mark. "The Alcons solution was more expensive than their second choice, but they wanted to choose a system that they would love for a long time. They had no hesitation about spending the extra money to achieve the best sound quality, in addition to Alcons sleek contemporary design. It was definitely the best and right choice for their church."

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